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The list of discussion questionswas gathered from a city-wide survey of the Springfield, Massachusetts, schools and government. These will form the basis for discussion in all sixth grade classes during a two month period. The classes will choose a student representative to attend a city-wide assembly of students to present the results of the class discussions.

The questions are in three areas: the school's responsibility to the child, the child's responsibility to the school, and the interrelated responsibilities of the community and child. Subjects considered in the first area are: student councils, homework, clubs, physical education, creative abilities, and school facilities. The second area includes such topics as self-evaluation and relationship to peers. Subjects considered in the third area are city libraries, community support, city recreation, and health facilities, law enforcement, discrimination, and the attitude of the child towards his environment.

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SPRINGFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Springfield, Massachusetts

September 4, 1963

CLEARINGHOUSE
CENTER FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
ON EDUCATIONAL DIFFERENCES
HARVARD GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02138

Subject: Elementary School Assembly

To: Sixth-grade Teachers Please Return To:

The topics for the Elementary School Assembly listed below were taken from the city-wide survey for our schools and government. This survey was completed by sixth grade pupils and teachers during the spring of 1963.

Many of the suggestions taken were in the form of questions;however, some were direct statements. These will form the basis for discussion in each sixth grade classroom during the months of September and October. It is recognized that the suggestions for class discussion are numerous and that no class could possibly discuss each one in depth. Therefore, individual teachers will select some topics under each heading for class use.

At the conclusion of the unit of study, each class will summarize its finding and select one representative and an alternate to represent his school. This should be completed by October 15th. Dr. McCook will meet with the group shortly after this deadline. Arrangements for the assembly as well as transportation of each school's delegate will be forwarded to the schools.

I. The School's Responsibility to the Children.
   A. Self-government
      1. What are most effective uses of student service councils?
      2. How should offenders be punished?
      3. What can be done to motivate a desire to help govern?
      4. Does the school allow each child his own personality or does it try to make children think, act, and dress alike?
      5. How do we foster self discipline? Why?
      6. To what extent can children help plan the daily program?
      7. Is discipline the same for all children breaking a certain rule?
      8. What can be done to prevent popularity elections?
      9. How does a student service council provide experience in self government?
      10. Should the school provide instruction in voting methods?

B. Instructional opportunities.

1. What about homework?
2. What type of training do teachers get?
3. Are teachers using modern methods?
4. Do all teachers stress all subjects equally? Should they?
5. How can we find time for all our work?
6. Should classes be smaller?
7. Should classes be divided according to sex?
8. Why are some subjects longer than others?
9. Should the school day be longer?
10. Should there be departmental work in grade six?
11. Should more emphasis be placed upon proper handwriting?
12. Why do we have special tests like the Iowa?
13. Should we have after school clubs?
14. Could classes visit other classes on the same grade level?
15. What can children do to help parents know what they are learning?
16. How much help should be provided by the home?
17. Are our freedoms and national heritage adequately covered?
18. Do we need larger resource libraries?

C. Health and Physical Education

1. Should schools teach boxing and wrestling?
2. Boys feel that a wider area of sports activities should be included in the physical education program.
3. More emphasis should be placed on good sportsmanship.
4. Should girls and boys be separated?
5. Are the exercises adequate for good physical fitness?
6. How does fitness contribute to good government?
7. Do teachers give as much thought to physical education as other subjects?

8. Why is dancing a part of physical education?

9. Why don't the girls do the same exercises as the boys?

10. Should there be a yearly checkup by school doctor?

11. Is there adequate First Aid service in the school?

12. To what extent is the school responsible for the health of the child?

13. What does the school do to check the health of the teachers and others who work in the schools?

14. Should the school be responsible for teaching parents the value of good health practice?

15. Girls feel that activities of a social nature should be sponsored after-school hours.

16. Should there be special physical education instructors in each school?

17. Where does the right of the school begin and end as far as friendliness?

18. Are schools providing a good basic diet in the lunch program?

19. Could children make up some of the school's menus?

D. Creative and Aesthetic Opportunities

1. What creative abilities should be developed?

2. Why should they be developed?

3. Are instruction, materials, and time adequate?

4. What should or could the school provide for those showing special skills and abilities?

5. Could we visit theatres, art galleries, concerts, etc.?

6. Could more emphasis be placed on classical music and creative writing?

7. Could the schools provide films on the lives of great artists and musicians?

8. Could we organize clubs around special interests and abilities and share learnings with others?

9. Can children really express themselves without feeling they must be and do like the others?

E. Physical Plant

1. Are schools geared to modern teaching?

2. Is there an advantage in each school having a large properly equipped gymnasium and playground.

3. Why should the school be clean at all times?

4. Are the windows clean and not broken?

5. What provisions are made to make school buildings safe?

6. What can be done to make our school more pleasant and more functional?

7. Are all buildings adequately protected against fire?

8. How may we help in keeping our school and playground a place of activity and beauty?

9. What measures does a school system use to see if it needs a new building?

10. Is there any future planning?

11. What do I think should be in a new school?

12. Would my ideas be of any help?

13. Could the school be used more than just for school during the day?

14. Are all schools equipped alike?

15. Should schools be of one floor structure and away from the center of the city.

16. What provisions are made for buildings that are under par?

17. Is maximum use made of all facilities?

18. Should each school have a swimming pool?

19. Should each school have fallout shelters?

20. Could mirrors be placed in all girlsrooms?

II. The Child's Responsibility to his School.

A. Self-evaluation

1. Are we aware of our abilities and shortcomings?

2. Do children show respect for their teachers, supplies and equipment, and their classmates?

3. Do we take advantage of a teacher's personality?

4. Do we let teachers help us?

5. Do I take advice from my teacher?

6. Do I meet my teacher half way?

7. Are materials wasted?

8. Do I watch and try to prevent damage to my building?

9. Do we take full advantage of the instruction offered?

10. Do we take pride in our school?

11. Am I a good contributing member in group discussion?

12. How should we dress for school?

13. How can we help our school if we have a physical handicap?

14. How can we improve one interest to our school if we don't like it?

B. Relation of the Child to his Peers.

1. How is a person who is "left out" of the group taken care of?

2. How can children learn to work and plan with other religious and racial groups?

3. Do older children take responsibility for younger children?

4. Should children "stick up" for a friend even when the friend is wrong?

5. To what extent should students be critical of each other?

6. Should students carry tales?

7. Should a student assume blame for another child's wrong-doing?

8. How do we keep our friends and make new ones?

9. What is my code in relation to smaller children and gangs?

10. Do I try to stop trouble before it starts?

11. Am I socially popular?

12. In what ways am I exceptional?

13. Does my work mislead others?

14. What does it take to be popular?

15. How much consideration should I give viewpoints other than my own?

16. What do I look for--picking a friend?

17. How much should my friend expect of me in the name of friendship?

18. How important is it to be accepted by other children?

19. How can we help new children feel welcome?

20. Do I understand other children's problems?

21. What will my friends think of me if I would rather paint a picture than play on the playground?

III. The Interrelated Responsibilities of the Community and Child.

A. Facilities and opportunities

1. Academic

a. Should there be a city library nearby?

b. What about "Y" courses?

c. Is the community supporting a good school program?

d. How can the library facilities be used to best advantage?

e. Does the community demand high standards for its schools?

f. How have I helped my community improve our facilities?

g. What is available?

h. What should be available?

i. What does the community provide for adult education?

2. Recreatory

a. Is a seasonal recreation program provided for all children in all neighborhoods?

b. Is full use made of church centers, Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., Boys' Clubs, Girls' Clubs and Community centers?

c. Does the Park Department enjoy good public support?

d. What is available?

e. What should be available?

f. How do I take part in community recreation?

g. If I don't take part, why not?

h. Who should have the responsibility for summer programs?

i. Are there adequate, clean swimming areas?

3. Health

a. Is there adequate health education in each school?

b. Should school nurses come every day?

c. What can be done to improve the physical examinations given by the school physicians?

d. Should schools promote activities to clean up neighborhood backyards.

e. Is enough attention being given to mental health?

f. How does my community protect my health and safety?

g. Is the water supply pure?

h. Is there a good sanitation department?

i. Is First Aid taught and stressed?

j. What do the clinics do? Are there enough?

k. Are there enough hospitals?

4. Law Enforcement

a. Is there close cooperation between the school and the police?

b. Should our patrols and traffic safety programs be advised by the police?

c. Are schools adequately protected while schools are not in session?

d. How can we encourage children to obey laws?

e. Should parents of children damaging school property be prosecuted by law?

f. Should there be less liquor stores near schools?

g. Take bums off the streets?

h. How can we better observe bicycle safety laws?

i. Are our law officers alert or lazy?

j. Are our laws properly enforced?

k. Do we have adequate law enforcement equipment?

l. What is my attitude toward laws and the people who enforce them?

m. Does a child's responsibility extend into the neighborhood or is it basically limited to school?

n. How can a community show the right attitudes to have?

o. To what extent should an adult (other than a policeman) correct the behavior of a child?

p. How can the community make the child feel that the policeman is a friend and not an enemy?

q. What are some of the laws children should be familiar with?

r. Why can't the police protect small children who are playing on the playground?

s. Why doesn't the city force people to keep their property clean and neat?

t. What can I do to maintain an active, but orderly school community?

B. Interrelated attitudes of child and various cultural groups.

1. Does discrimination exist in our community?

2. How are differences in race, color, and creed met and worked out?

3. How can we better share the parts of various cultures?

4. How can we provide opportunities for children from various parts of the city to come together and discuss problems?

5. Cultural groups should also respect the individual rights of others.

6. What are the problems and conditions of the different groups?

7. Do we understand and appreciate them?

8. How can a community develop in each person a respect and concern for all?

9. Has the child learned to play, study, and work, and live with Americans who have different colored skin, religion, or amounts of money?

10. Does he recognize the contributions of various cultural groups that have made our nation what it is today?

11. Are the problems of other groups ever discussed?

C. Attitude of the child toward his environment.

1. Is my attitude one of acceptance or rebellion?

2. Should we make the most of what is offered in any situation?

3. How can one help to improve his environment?

4. Why should we always try to do the best with what we have?

5. Why carry over ideals of the classroom to his environment?

6. What are parents attitudes toward destruction of property?

7. Do I take advantage of my environment?

8. How can the school help a child become aware of the advantages of his environment?

9. What responsibility does the school have to point out the disadvantages?

10. Should child accept environment as it is or try to improve it?

Co-chairmen
Elementary School Assembly
Thomas J. Donahoe
Richard G. Martin